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"(b) No specific recommendations have been made in the report regarding the purchase of machinery and their cost."

MR. SPEAKER :—" The next question, which is on the same subject, may also be answered."

* 1227 *Q.*—SRI K. ARANGANATHAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether there was a conference of Experts and Representatives of both the State and Union Governments regarding the working of the Lignite Mines in South Arcot on 27th December 1954 at Madras; and

(*b*) if so, the subjects discussed and the results of the discussion?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" (*a*) Yes, Sir.

"(*b*) The Project report submitted by the Consulting Engineers (Powell Duffryn Technical Services, Limited) was discussed generally. It was agreed at the conference that further investigations should be carried out and an integrated scheme for the mining and utilization of lignite should be drawn up by the Project Co-ordinating Committee, based on the results of the investigations."

SRI N. K. PALANISAMY :—" நெய்வேலி பழுப்பு நிலக்கரிச் சுரங்கத்திற்கு வேண்டிய மிஷினுடைய விலை என்ன? அந்த மிஷினை இங்கிலாந்திலிருந்து வாங்கவேண்டுமென்று நிபுணர் கமிட்டி சிபாரிசு செய்திருக்கிறார்களா ? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" மிஷினைப்பற்றியே ஒன்றும் சொல்லாமலிருக்கும்போது அதன் விலையைப்பற்றி என்ன சொல்லமுடியும் ? "

SRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM :—" போதிய பம்ப் செட் இல்லாத காரணத்தினால் 'பைலட்' திட்டம் ஒத்திவைக்கப்படுகிறது. எப்பொழுது பம்ப் செட்டுகள் எதிர்பார்க்கப்படுகின்றன ? இன்னும் எவ்வளவு காலத்திற்குள் 'பைலட்' திட்டம் வெற்றிகரமாக முடிக்கப்படும் என்று அறிய விரும்புகிறேன்."

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" டெண்டர்கள் கேட்கப் பட்டிருந்தன. அவைகளெல்லாம் வந்துவிட்டன. இம்மாதம் 16-ந் தேதி கோஆர்டினேடிங் கமிட்டி சென்னையில் கூடி, டெண்டர்களைப் பற்றி முடிவு செய்வார்கள். அதற்குப் பிறகு 'ஆர்டர்' கொடுக்கப் பட்டு வேலை எடுத்துக் கொள்ளப்படும். பம்புகள் செய்வதற்கு அதற்கு மேல் ஏறக்குறைய மூன்று மாதங்கள் ஆகுமென்று நினைக்கிறேன்."

* 1228 *Q.*—SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" I do not propose to put questions 1228 and 1234."

Appointment of Harijans as village adhikaris and menons

* 1229 *Q.*—SRI K. KUNHI MOHAMED SHAFEE (on behalf of Sri M. Chadayan) : Will the Hon. the Minister for Revenue be pleased to state the number of Harijans appointed as village adhikaris and menons in the district of Malabar?

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THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" Adhikari 1; Menon 1."

SRI O. KORAN :—" Because the appointment of village officers under the hereditary system is in vogue, it is very difficult for Harijans to get appointed as village officers. Therefore have the Government any idea to abolish the hereditary system?"

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" Ther is an idea about that under consideration."

SRI R. KRISHNAN :—" ஹரிஜனங்களுக்கு கிராம அதிகாரி, மேனன் ஆகிய உத்தியோகங்கள் கொடுப்பதற்கு ' சீட்கள் ' ' ரிசர்வ் ' பண்ண முடியுமா ? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" It cannot be done while the hereditary system prevails. When we take up the new system of appointing qualified men, then we can consider that."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" The post requires the passing of certain tests and the possession of survey qualifications. May I know whether there is sufficient number of qualified Harijans? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" There are not very many; I find that there are only one or two Harijans working as village officers there."

SRI K. P. GOPALAN :—" There are Harijans qualified for these posts. In Malabar generally there is a monopoly for these posts. So I request the Hon. Minister to instruct the Collector of Malabar to appoint qualified Harijans when vacancies arise in the posts of village munsifs, village menons and village peons."

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" For the non-hereditary areas, we will take steps to see whether more Harijans could not be appointed."

SRI K. KUNHI MOHAMED SHAFEE :—" As the Harijan community is very under-represented in the posts of village officers, will the Government devise ways and means for giving more representation in those posts to qualified Harijans? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" When we consider the general question of reform of the village officers system, this thing will be taken into consideration."

SRI T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—" Hereditary system of appointment to the posts of village officers stands in the way of qualified Harijans and backward communities being appointed to these posts. May I know whether the Government have any proposal to abolish this hereditary system which is a creation of the British Imperialism for the purpose of preparing stooges for the British here? "

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THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" All these things will be taken into consideration under the wider scheme of reorganization of the land revenue system."

SRI C. H. KANARAN :—" The holders of the posts of adhikaris and menons, especially the posts of adhikaris, come from feudal families and from high castes. Therefore feudal and communal oppression on Harijans is there. Will the Government reserve for Harijans at least a certain percentage of the posts of menons and adhikaris, as the Government are reserving for Harijans in other departments of Government? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" The Government are anxious to get rid of caste system. But the hon. Member suggests the perpetuation of caste system."

SRI S. THINAKARASAMI THEVAR :—" Is it a fact that there are very many Harijan village officers below the rank of village headmen? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" Yes, Sir, they are called village menials and, I think, cent per cent of them are Harijans."

SRI K. PARTHASARATHY :—" Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the observations of the Subramanyam Committee that the institution of hereditary village officers may be repugnant to our Constitution? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" As I have already said the whole question is being considered."

SRI V. BALAKRISHNAN :—" Does the equality of sex in appointments extend to village officers also and if so, has any woman been appointed as village officer? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" I am glad to know the opinion of the sex expert."

SRI T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—" I am grateful to the Hon. Minister that the question of abolishing the hereditary system is under the consideration of the Government. May I know from him that when new appointments of karnams, peons and munsifs are made, the Government will see that qualified persons from Harijan and Backward communities are appointed for such posts? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" When qualified Harijans are available their claims are always considered."

Advisory Board under Minimum Wages Act

* 1230 *Q.*—SRI N. K. PALANISAMY : Will the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Madras Government have constituted an Advisory Board under section 7 of the Minimum Wages Act, 1948: and

(*b*) if so, the functions and powers of the Board?